



This is the exterior of the American Chemical Service Co. at Griffith.

# Don't panic on cleanup

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GRIFFITH — Officials here are pleased to learn American Chemical Service Co. has been put on the Environmental Protection Agency's superfund cleanup list, but cautioned against panic.

The site was named by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as one of 133 sites across the nation targeted for cleanup.

Sherry Evans-Carmichael, planner for solid waste management for the Indiana Board of Health, said that ground-water contamination has been found on the site in the

upper water table but not in the lower water table from where most of the residents in the area get their water.

The last test conducted by the EPA was in May, and there was no evidence then that the contamination had progressed beyond the American Chemical grounds, she said.

Griffith Public Works Director Glen V. Reyome also said repeated tests at the town's sanitary landfill site, which is adjacent to one of the chemical burial sites, have been negative, as well.

The first thing the superfund money will do is allow more testing of the site to determine

the full extent of the contamination. From those results a remedial action feasibility master plan will be developed and it will be decided whether total excavation or merely removal of the buried material is necessary, Mrs. Evans-Carmichael said.

She said the announcement that American Chemical had been added to the list of dump sites in the nation that pose health threats will understandably cause panic among the residents but she asked for caution and patience.

"There are just too many variables that can affect the migration, such as the presence

of a natural clay layer in the ground that can absorb the contaminated material and prevent its spread," she said.

Reyome said there are about 80 wells in the area that will need testing.

The contamination stems from disposal of chemical waste drums and slug that was buried on the site from 1958 to 1975. The company voluntarily stopped dumping in 1975.

Reyome said, "We've been working with American Chemical for the last 10 to 15 years and they (the company) have really straightened out. They have complied with everything the EPA has told them to do."